

JUNE/JULY 2003

AMANNEE



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COVER PHOTO: Deputy Chief of Mission Mr. Gary Pergl delivers his remarks at the opening of Workshop on "Reporting on HIV/AIDS" for Journalists on June 16, 2003. With him are Mr. Kojo Yankah, (left), President, (AIJC); and Prof. Sakyi A. Amoa, (right), Director-General, Ghana AIDS Commission.

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Independence Day, 2003

A Message From the President

On July 4, 1776, our Founders adopted the Declaration of Independence, creating a great Nation and establishing a hopeful vision of liberty and equality that endures today. This Independence Day, we express gratitude for our many blessings and we celebrate the ideals of freedom and opportunity that our Nation holds dear.

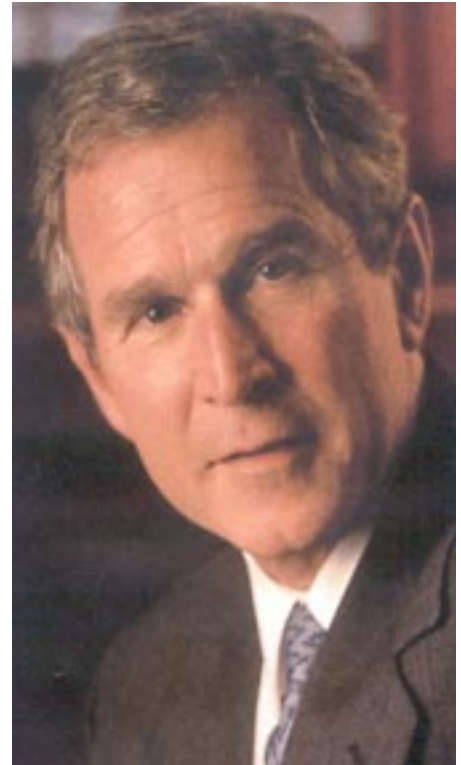
America's strength and prosperity are testaments to the enduring power of our founding ideals, among them, that all men are created equal, and that liberty is God's gift to humanity, the birthright of every individual. The American creed remains powerful today because it represents the universal hope of all mankind.

On the Fourth of July, we are grateful for the blessings that freedom represents and for the opportunities it affords. We are thankful for the love of our family and friends and for our rights to think, speak, and worship freely. We are also humbled in remembering the many courageous men and women who have served and sacrificed throughout our history to preserve, protect, and expand these liberties. In liberating oppressed peoples and demonstrating honor and bravery in battle, the members of our Armed Forces reflect the best of our Nation.

We also recognize the challenges that America now faces. We are winning the war against enemies of freedom, yet more work remains. We will prevail in this noble mission. Liberty has the power to turn hatred into hope.

America is a force for good in the world, and the compassionate spirit of America remains a living faith. Drawing on the courage of our Founding Fathers and the resolve of our citizens, we willingly embrace the challenges before us.

Laura joins me in sending our best wishes for a safe and joyous Independence Day. May God bless you, and may God continue to bless America.



President George Bush

GEORGE BUSH

Remarks: Celebrating the 227th Anniversary Of the Independence of the United States of America July 4, 2003

By Ambassador Mary Carlin Yates

I am so pleased to be celebrating our American Independence Day with all of you—Ghanaians, Americans, and the international community.

In the United States, the Fourth of July is traditionally a day when people go to the beach, have a barbeque, see a parade and of course watch fireworks.

We fly the American flag, display red, white and blue, and listen to the national anthem as we are doing here this evening. Today is a day for celebration, so this will not be a long speech.

But I hope you will indulge me while I share just a little of the history of Independence Day, because I believe that Ghanaians and Americans share a common heritage as pioneers of independence and defenders of freedom.

Two hundred and twenty-seven years ago, representatives from the thirteen American colonies feared they might be convicted of treason for declaring their independence. Despite these fears, those 56 representatives ratified the Declaration of Independence on July Fourth, 1776. They ratified this document because they fervently believed in the ideals of democracy, freedom, and liberty.

Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence, believed that we are all endowed with certain inalienable rights, among them, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Jefferson wrote, and I quote “To secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”

That phrase “consent of the governed” is a bold and powerful statement, and a concept that is a challenge to us in America.

227 years ago, there were no governments that truly offered their citizens a



Ambassador Mary C. Yates



Fore view of the residence of the U.S. Ambassador in Ghana full of July 4th decorations.



Smartly looking servers at a Popcorn Stand ready to attend to evryone.

voice! In America the framers of our constitution spent many years trying to build a government that truly represented ordinary citizens. Today in the United States, the constant melting pot, we are still constantly trying to reshape and reform our government so that the diversity of opinions and voices of our people are heard.

Here in Ghana—as citizens of the first African nation to declare its independence, Ghanaians have long understood the importance of the ideals expressed in the American Declaration of Independence.

A decade after blazing the new democratic trail in sub-Saharan Africa, your country is working to construct a government where all people are heard.

Today I challenge you to view this time in your nation's development as an opportunity for all Ghanaians to fully participate in and benefit from a strong democracy—a democracy that has accountability,

transparency and the true consent of the governed.

Many of us have seen firsthand the tragic results of governments without the consent of the governed: oppression and tyranny. We only have to look at some of our neighbors in the sub-region to see what happens in the absence of democracy. That is why I want to re-iterate that to be here in Ghana—democratic Ghana—on the Fourth of July is such an honor.

We Americans recognize, support and appreciate the vital role that Ghana, as a strong democratic nation, and peace-maker plays in the sub-region, in Africa, and in the world.

President George Bush travels to Africa next week, and in a speech last week he pledged that America is fully engaged in a broad concerted effort to help Africans find peace, to help Africans fight disease, to help Africans build prosperity and to

help Africans improve their own lives.

I am pleased to report that President Bush will be meeting with President Kufuor in Senegal on July 8. This meeting with democratically elected West African leaders re-enforces our shared commitment to democracy as part of the deepening cultural, economic, social and political ties that unite our two nations.

And in this spirit of partnership, cooperation, and commitment to democracy, I would ask you to join me in a toast to the health of the President of the Republic of Ghana, His Excellency, John Agyekum Kufour.

May you, Mr. President, and the people of Ghana enjoy peace, prosperity and success in the year to come, and may we all continue to enjoy the benefits of democracy, freedom and liberty.

Thank you.***

Peace Corps Trainees Arrive in Ghana

Accra – Ghana, the first country in the world to receive Peace Corps Volunteers, has since that time hosted Peace Corps without interruption. To date, over 3,963 Peace Corps Volunteers have served in Ghana, and presently 117 Peace Corps Volunteers are engaged in Education, Forestry and Environment, Health/Water and Sanitation, and Small Enterprise Development activities in all ten regions of Ghana.

The first of two groups of Peace Corps Trainees expected this year arrived on

Friday, June 20, 2003. This group of Trainees is made up of 19 males and 13 females, and their ages range between 21 and 55 years. The Trainees will undergo a Community-Based Training program in Agona Swedru (southern site) and Bolgatanga (northern site) for most of the nine-week training period. At the end of their training, the successful Trainees will be sworn in as Peace Corps Volunteers.

The majority of the Volunteers in this group will be assigned to resource-

scarce schools in remote areas all over the country to support Ghana's education reform. Fourteen of the Trainees will teach science (phy-sics, chemistry, biology and integrated science), eleven will teach mathematics/computer, and the remaining seven will teach visual arts in Senior Secondary Schools (SSS) and in some Schools for the Deaf.

Peace Corps/Ghana currently integrates Gender, Youth and Development and HIV/AIDS Education and Prevention into all its programs.***

U.S. Peace Corps Donates Books to Amenfiman Secondary School

By Laurence Likens

Peace Corps Volunteer, Wasa Akropong

On February 19, 2003 a shipping container carrying an estimated 25,000 assorted books arrived at my site in Wasa Akropong in the Western Region of Ghana. The container also included science equipment for Amenfiman Secondary School where I am teaching science through the U.S. Peace Corps. The books and equipment were donated through Rotary Club International. The books are primarily English literature and grammar, science, health, math, and adult fiction/nonfiction novels. Some of the textbooks are for the JSS level. The science equipment included 12 microscopes, a distillation apparatus, 2 electronic balances, 6 beam balances, and burettes.

The project was initiated in July 2002 when a teacher at Amenss asked if I could get some books donated to his town's library in Prestea. He was interested in textbooks and storybooks. So I wrote to my mother asking her to appeal to schools in my hometown in the U.S. to donate a few textbooks for English, math, and science.

My mother informed me that she had contacted Rotary Club in Munster, Indiana which was sponsoring a book drive for Africa. Rotary chose to donate the books to two countries in Africa: Liberia and Ghana. The few books I thought I was receiving turned into a whole shipping container worth of books and equipment. My mother was a key facilitator in this entire project. Many of the books came from my old school district as well as the one in which she formerly taught.

One of the goals of Rotary Club is to ensure that this program is sustainable in that the books will actually get to needy schools and communities and they will be put to good use. Rotary therefore felt confident in working with me because I'm a Peace Corps volunteer and I would be able to supervise the distribution and use of the materials. Munster Rotary Club collaborated with Sekondi-Takoradi Rotary Club in Ghana who saw to the shipping expenses, storage, and transport of the books to Wasa Akropong.

So far the books will go to benefit three town libraries, two JSS and six secondary schools: Wasa Akropong, Prestea, Bogoso, Huni Valley, Half Assini, Dunkwa, Aboso, and Damang. Three of the schools have Peace Corps volunteers. The science equipment is especially helpful to Amenfiman Secondary School. Now that the school has this equipment, students can do more practicals in chemistry and biology. The school is also alleviated from having to borrow certain equipment from sister schools.***



Some students of Amenfiman Secondary School help to offload the donated books.

PEACE CORPS ENLISTS 1,000 NEW VOLUNTEERS TO FIGHT HIV/AIDS

African and Caribbean nations will be targeted

Washington — As part of historic legislation signed into law by President Bush May 27, the Peace Corps is mobilizing 1,000 new volunteers to fight HIV / AIDS in targeted African and Caribbean nations. The new recruits will join the more than 2,100 Peace Corps volunteers already engaged in HIV/AIDS projects around the world.

The new law, H.R. 1298, the U.S. Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Act of 2003, will direct \$15 billion (\$15,000 million) over the next five years to fight HIV/AIDS abroad, focusing on 12 African and two Caribbean countries where HIV / AIDS is heavily concentrated.

President Bush, in signing the bipartisan legislation into law at a May 27 ceremony at the Department of State, expressed his belief that fighting AIDS was a "moral duty," and specifically recognized Peace Corps volunteers for their work abroad..

"Peace Corps volunteers are making an impact at the local level, and by committing an additional 1,000 volunteers, Peace Corps will be

able to enhance a number of programs and expand HIV/AIDS projects in current Peace Corps countries," Peace Corps Director Gaddi H. Vasquez stated in a press release announcing the initiative.

"The expansion includes additional volunteers working in targeted African countries, as well as those in the Caribbean. Also, more educational material, written in local languages, will be developed for volunteers to use in their communities," he added.

Peace Corps currently has more than 2,100 volunteers worldwide working on HIV / AIDS activities. Peace Corps programs in two countries, Botswana and Swaziland, are devoted entirely to the pandemic. In addition, Peace Corps is exploring partnerships with other Fed-

eral agencies to further expand its efforts as part of the President's initiative.

The Crisis Corps program, in which former Peace Corps volunteers return to service for a limited period, will also commit volunteers to fight the disease, the Peace Corp press release noted, by lending their expertise to non-governmental organizations and government agencies worldwide for assignments of up to six months.

The Peace Corps will also enhance the ability of volunteers and their communities to obtain and exchange information about the latest innovations in public health education, behavior change, and delivery of services to people living with HIV / AIDS through the use of information technology.

Since 1961, more than 168,000 volunteers have served in the Peace Corps, working in such diverse fields as education, health and HIV / AIDS education and awareness, information technology, business development, the environment, and agriculture. Peace Corps Volunteers serve two-year tours of duty, must be U.S. citizens and at least 18 years of age.***



Bush Signs Bill Authorizing \$15 Billion to Combat HIV/AIDS

President will challenge other G-8 countries to make similar commitment

By Charles Hays Burchfield,
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington — President Bush May 27 signed into law the U.S. Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Act of 2003, which authorizes \$15,000 million to be spent over five years to help 14 countries combat HIV/AIDS.

"The legislation I sign today launches an emergency effort that will provide \$15 billion over the next five years to fight AIDS abroad," Bush said. "This is the largest, single up front commitment in history for an international public health initiative involving a specific disease."

Bush signed the bill in a ceremony at the State Department before a crowd of close to 600 people. The ambassadors from the countries that will be receiving assistance — Botswana, Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia in Africa and Guyana and Haiti in the Caribbean — stood behind the president during the signing.

Secretary of State Colin Powell and Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson spoke briefly about the importance of fighting HIV/AIDS.

Powell noted that HIV/AIDS is one of the biggest killers on earth. "It is more devastating than any army, any conflict, or any weapon of mass destruction," he said. The new legislation includes additional money for the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and more funding for U.S. efforts in many countries to prevent mother-to-child transmission of the HIV/AIDS.

Bush said this "comprehensive program has the potential in this decade to prevent 7 million new HIV infections, provide life-extending drugs to at least 2 million infected people, give humane care to 10 million HIV sufferers and AIDS orphans."

The president said that when he attends the G-8 Summit opening in Evian-les-Bains, France, June 1, he will challenge the other participants "to follow our lead and to make a similar commitment made by the United States of America so we can save even more lives."

Bush welcomed the work of religious and educational institutions to confront the

AIDS crisis. He singled out John F. Galbraith, president and CEO of the Catholic Medical Mission Board (CMMB). CMMB runs 15 clinics in southern Africa and Haiti, where more than 20,000 pregnant women each year receive HIV testing and counseling and drug therapy to prevent the transmission of the virus to their children, the president said.

Galbraith, who also serves on the President's Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS, said he hopes his organization will be one that receives funding from the legislation so CMMB can do more in Africa. He said he's pleased that the bill offers a balanced approach that includes both prevention and treatment.

"I think it's the right step at this time," Galbraith said. "We at Catholic Medical Mission Board are very happy that this day has finally come."

The presidents of two non-profit organizations, Leslee J. Unruh of Abstinence Clearinghouse and Shepherd Smith of the Institute for Youth Development said they were both pleased with the support for abstinence-based prevention education in the bill.

"We are thrilled about the bipartisan support to help us spread the word all over this world about the effectiveness of abstinence," Unruh said.

"For the first time in this epidemic, I really feel a sense of hope that we can get a handle on it and ultimately curtail its spread," Smith said.

Global Health Council President and CEO Nils Daulaire said his organization has been engaged for a long time trying to move a "strong" AIDS bill forward through outreach efforts that included



US President George W. Bush will visit Senegal, South Africa, Botswana, Uganda, and Nigeria as part of a tour of Africa that will focus on AIDS, Liberia and the war on terrorism.

generating grass-roots support and lobbying members of Congress and the Bush administration. "We are thrilled that a bill has been passed and that the president's signing it, and we're waiting to have the opportunity to do the real work, which is getting services out to the people who need them," Daulaire said.

Daulaire said the Global Health Council is the world's largest membership alliance dedicated to saving lives by improving health throughout the world. Its membership comprises health-care professionals and organizations — nongovernmental organizations, foundations, corporations, government agencies and academic institutions — that work to ensure global health for all.

Linda M. Distlerath, vice president for global health policy at Merck & Co., Inc., a pharmaceutical firm, said Merck is very excited to be a participant in the public-private sector partnerships to fight HIV/AIDS.

Distlerath praised the president's leadership on the issue, and said "Now it's time to put sufficient resources as well as the support organization in place to make sure the funding can be used at a country level for a very efficient, accountable and results-driven outcome."

Distlerath said Merck currently sells two HIV/AIDS drugs, Stocrin and Sustiva, at non-profit prices in African countries

and has been working on an AIDS vaccine for the past 17 years. She said Merck has pledged \$62 million to curb the spread of HIV in Africa and currently trains physicians in Africa specifically in HIV/AIDS care.

Another corporation that wants to help in the fight against HIV/AIDS is DaimlerChrysler. W. Frank Fountain, senior vice president of government affairs at DaimlerChrysler, said he thinks the legislation signed by Bush is "fantastic." "I think it shows America's leadership, and it's going to put us in the forefront of the HIV/AIDS fight for Africa and the world, and other countries should follow suit and match the U.S. funds," Fountain said.

Fountain said DaimlerChrysler recently built a \$200 million factory in South

Africa — one of the biggest private-sector investments in southern Africa in many years. Fountain said at least one third of the employees at the factory have AIDS or are infected with HIV, and Daimler Chrysler is taking care of its employees.

"We put together one of the most progressive health care programs for our workers and their families anywhere in Africa," Fountain said.

Both Powell and Bush have said that public-private partnerships are crucial to fighting HIV/AIDS. Bush said the United States will keep its commitment until the tide is turned against the disease.

"The United States of America has the power and we have the moral duty to help," Bush said. "And I'm proud that our blessed and generous nation is fulfilling that duty."***

Success of Bush's AIDS Initiative Depends on African Attitudes, Not Money

Capitol Hill forum questions whether Africa is up to the challenge

By Bruce Greenberg,
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington — In remarks sharply critical of many sub-Saharan African governments, three panelists at a Capitol Hill forum questioned whether funds allocated through President Bush's AIDS initiative would be sufficient to stem the continent's HIV-AIDS pandemic.

"Poverty and illness in Africa and the developing world are the most important health-related issues facing us today," commented James Glassman, who suggested that free-markets with limited governmental regulation, together with scientific, technological and medical advances are the keys to stemming the AIDS pandemic in Africa.

Glassman, an American Enterprise Institute fellow and the host of Tech Central Station.com, set the tone of the session in opening remarks at a May 14 Capitol Hill forum sponsored by the private sector online organization, Tech Central Station, producer of an Internet journal of global public affairs and opinion. He was joined physically and philosophically on the panel by Richard Tren, director of South Africa's "Africa Fighting Malaria" organization, and Roger Bate, its U.S. director.

Tren asserted that government obstructionism and indifference have been the greatest impediments to treating the majority of Africa's AIDS patients. "Fifty percent of medical resources are stolen," he said. "Poverty, ignorance, social stigma, the imbalance of doctor-nurse ratios to patient populations, and lack of treatment facilities and proper infrastructure contribute to the high AIDS death rates in most African countries."

Citing Nigeria, with 7 million AIDS victims, as a case in point, he said, even "if low-cost generic drugs are available, testing, a pre-requisite for treatment, is often out of the price range of most Nigerians, and clinics and staff are so overwhelmed that many patients cannot get the proper treatments they need."

In Zimbabwe, Tren said, government obfuscation and corruption, together with a scarcity of doctors and other medical personnel, who have left the country due to its oppressive policies towards non-blacks, and an overwhelmed medical infrastructure all contribute to its high fatality rate.



James Glassman

Tren was particularly critical of the policies of the Mbeki regime in South Africa, which over the past several years has created obstacles to the widespread availability of AIDS drugs among the general population as well as diverting attention by making spurious accusations against Western countries of intentionally poisoning black Africans with their medicines.

Tren did praise Botswana, which, although suffering one of the highest HIV infection rates in the world, is an example of a country with a successful approach towards stemming its AIDS deaths. "Botswana has developed a robust medical approach to the problem, largely through joint collaboration with Western drug companies, such as Merck, and charities such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

"In the final analysis, stemming the AIDS infection rate lies with Africa itself," he stated.

"Western assistance to Africa often does more harm than good, owing to corrupt and inept governments, which are the recipients of this aid. Perhaps, particularly in the case of AIDS funding, the proposed 15 billion dollars allocated by Bush's initiative would be better administered by international charities, foundations and NGO's actually committed to this cause."

Roger Bate indicated that only some 50,000 Africans suffering from AIDS-related illnesses are now receiving quality treatment, but to increase that number to a half million over the short term will require a dramatic upgrade in the medical infrastructure, along with accelerated training of qualified medical personnel, whether it's done by the governments of Africa, or by NGOs or the drug corporations. He questioned whether the five-year goal of treating two million patients was achievable.

He added, "Education and abstinence programs, along with wider acceptance of condoms, should lead to drastic drops in infection rates over the next several years. Right now there are 20 million people in Africa with AIDS, and we have to give them hope."

While governments are sometimes as much the problem as the solution, he said, to get a handle on the situation, "ultimately you need to see more African governments becoming more democratic. Regardless of how much money is spent on AIDS, the long run solutions for Africa are not going to come from [Western] aid, but from free trade and commerce and the evolution from dictatorship to democracy." ***

US EMBASSY SPONSORS WORKSHOP ON “REPORTING ON HIV/AIDS” FOR JOURNALISTS

The Public Affairs Section of the US Embassy, in collaboration with the Africa Institute of Journalism and Communications (AIJC) organized a five-day workshop on “Reporting On HIV/AIDS” for 26 journalists in Accra.

The five-day workshop was held at AIJC from June 16 - June 20. Ms Rachel Jones, an award-winning reporter from National Public Radio, Washington D.C, led participants through issues such as the news worthiness of HIV/AIDS, particularly in the African context, and examined the role of the media in the crusade against the pandemic. The workshop also held sessions on how best to cover persons living with HIV/AIDS and the professional and ethical standards that should be used in reporting on HIV/AIDS.

Mr. Gary Pergl, Deputy Chief of Mission of the embassy, opened the workshop, which was chaired by Mr. Kojo Yankah, President, AIJC. Professor Sakyi Amoa, Director-General, Ghana AIDS Commission, gave the keynote address which is found on page 14 of this issue of *Amannee*.

Participants of the workshop had the opportunity of visiting the offices of the



Ghana AIDS Commission and had a fruitful discussion with its Chairman, Professor Sakyi Amoa. They also had the opportunity of visiting the Fevers Unit of the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital to interview people living with HIV/AIDS.

The highly successful workshop was sponsored by the Public Affairs of the US Embassy. In the pages ahead are the impressions of some of the participants.***



Photos: Above, Deputy Chief of mission Gary Pergl delivers his opening address. With him are (from left), Mr. David Queen, Director, Public Affairs Section of the Embassy; Ms. Rachel Jones of National Public Radio, Washington DC, Resource person; Mr. Kojo Yankah, President of the Africa Institute of Journalism and Communication; and Prof. Sakyi A. Amoa, Director-General of the Ghana AIDS Commission. Below, Some of the student participants at the workshop.

REPORTING ON HIV / AIDS WORKSHOP

Rachel Jones, a reporter from National Public Radio in Washington, DC, led a workshop in Accra from June 16-20 for 30 journalists on reporting on HIV/AIDS. This workshop was a collaborative effort between the U.s. Embassy's Public Affairs Section and the African Institute of Journalism and Communication, a local training center for working journalists. The workshop was designed to give journalists information, sources and perspectives to encourage more insightful and sensitive HIV/AIDS media coverage in Ghana. Rachel Jones inspired the participants to write more compassionately and effectively about HIV/AIDS. Since the close of the workshop, the Public Affairs Section has already seen an increase and improvement in HIV/AIDS reporting. The workshop participants have also formed a "League of HIV/AIDS Reporters" and plan to meet regularly to keep each other informed on HIV/AIDS issues here in Ghana. ***



Ms. Rachel Jones of National Public Radio, Washington DC stressing a point on HIV/AIDS during a visit to the Fevers Unit of the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital as part of the workshop on "Reporting on HIV/AIDS". Looking on are some of the nurses of the Fevers Unit and participants of the workshop.

Remarks by The US Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission at Opening of “Reporting on HIV/AIDS” Workshop for Journalists June 16, 2003

Director-General of the Ghana AIDS Commission,

Administrators and Faculty Members of the Africa Institute of Journalism and Communication,

Members of the press and distinguished guests,

Good morning. I am so pleased to be with you today at the beginning of what I am sure will be an

instructive and thought-provoking week on a topic that is one of the most serious issues facing all of us, HIV/AIDS. It is clear from the attendance at this opening ceremony that there is no shortage of compassion and concern about HIV/AIDS here in Ghana.

Our embassy's Public Affairs Section is proud to join the Africa Institute of Journalism and Communication in sponsoring this workshop on Reporting on HIV/AIDS. The U.S. embassy is also proud today to be able to bring Ms. Rachel Jones here to help lead this workshop. Ms. Jones comes from America's premier radio news network, National Public Radio, and I know she will share some excellent reporting strategies with you.

Rachel, on behalf of our embassy, Akwaaba.

If there is one issue that crosses boundaries, borders, and political lines, it is HIV/AIDS. We must all be partners in the fight against this disease. The United States government has been and will continue to be a partner to Ghana in the crucial battle against HIV/AIDS. Our embassy's focus has been largely on reducing the rate of infection. This year, the U.S. mission, through the United States Agency for International Development, plans to devote approximately 7 million dollars to prevention programs targeting at-risk and vulnerable groups. U.S. Peace Corps volunteers throughout rural areas of Ghana are also developing community education programs on HIV/AIDS. These efforts, combined with the hard work of the Ghanaian government

and the dedication of organizations like the Ghana AIDS Commission, will ensure that the commitment to combating HIV/AIDS here in Ghana remains strong.

Concern about HIV/AIDS is reflected at the highest levels of the United States government. Recently President Bush demonstrated the depth of the U.S. commitment to the fight against HIV/AIDS through the signing of the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. This plan pledges 15 billion

prevention, treatment, and most importantly by portraying people living with HIV/AIDS with compassion and dignity. It is an unfortunate reality around the world that despite the many years that have passed since HIV/AIDS became a public health crisis, there is still a social stigma attached to HIV/AIDS. Journalists can help reduce this stigma and reduce the suffering of those people living with HIV/AIDS through their reporting.



Deputy Chief of Mission Gary Pergl (middle), flanked by Mr. Kojo Yankah, President, (AIJC) (left), and Prof. Sakyi A. Amoah, Director-General of the Ghana AIDS Commission (right).

dollars to fund HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment programs in key African and Caribbean countries over the next five years. This is the largest upfront commitment to a single disease in history. As President Bush said upon signing this bill, “America makes this commitment for a clear reason, directly rooted in our founding”. We believe in the value and dignity of every human life”.

This concept of the value and dignity of every human life is one that is sometimes missing in reporting on HIV/AIDS. It is difficult to think about and discuss HIV/AIDS—people hear the alarming statistics and want to push HIV/AIDS away and put HIV/AIDS out of their minds. Journalists can help the public face this disease by educating people about transmission,

Ghana has a free and very active media. But with this freedom also comes a responsibility. You have the freedom here in Ghana to report on what you feel the public needs to know, and you also have the freedom to choose how you cover difficult topics like HIV/AIDS. I encourage you to use this week to ask questions and to engage in active debate on how best to portray HIV/AIDS. I hope you leave at the end of the week with some ideas that will enrich your reporting.

On behalf of our embassy and Ambassador Yates, I would again like to thank the Africa Institute of Journalism and Communication for hosting this workshop. I wish all of you a challenging and productive week. Thank you.***

WORKSHOP ON “REPORTING ON HIV/AIDS” (JUNE 16 - 20, 2003)

Welcome remarks by Kojo Yankah,
President, *Africa Institute of Journalism
and Communication (AIJC)*

Mr. Gary Pergl, Deputy Chief of
Mission, U.S. Embassy,

Ms Susan Parker-Burns, Information
Officer, Public Affairs Section,

Professor Sakyi Amoa, Director
General, Ghana AIDS Commission,

Facilitators and Workshop
Participants,

Iwould like to extend a warm welcome
to you all at the start of a very
important mission for AIJC -the first
of a series of Workshops on “Reporting
on HIV/AIDS”.

This Workshop was designed in the
course of last year, but it has been made
possible today because of the
collaboration we had from the American
Embassy working through the Public
Affairs Section, and we thank them
sincerely for it.

It is a set mission of this Institute
to seek to be a creative leader and trainer,
to deliver enriched learning experience,
and promote professional and economic
development. Our courses and our



teaching approaches are geared toward
enriching our graduates with such
knowledge and professional experience
that they can contribute meaningfully
to the economic development of our
dear nation.

There is no doubt that HIV / AIDS has
become a national concern; there is little
doubt that if not checked it will subvert (if
it is not already subverting) all national
efforts at economic development. Our
estimation is that the media need to focus
more on issues that affect economic
development, and HIV/AIDS should
certainly be considered one of the priority
issues.

How do we treat the subject matter?
How news worthy can we make it? How do
we relate the scourge to our economic
development?

These and other angles have been
proposed for this five-day workshop for
working journalists; and we are grateful to
the American Embassy for further
sponsoring one of our facilitators. We shall
certainly seek more collaborators to take
this course to all parts of the country .

For our own purposes, we shall
incorporate it in the Course Structure of
the AIJC so that second/final year students
can opt to choose it as a specialized area.
Once again, I would like to thank the
American Embassy for the support, and of
course the Ghana AIDS Commission for the
encouragement.

You are all welcome once again.***

How Eunice Saw the HIV/AIDS Reporting Workshop

By Eunice Menka
GNA, Accra.

A five-day workshop on reporting
on HIV/AIDS began on 16th of
June through to the 20th. It was
an intensive course and our resource
person, Ms. Rachel Jones from the US
made us understand that it was time we
shifted our focus from reporting on only
political issues to real social issues that
was bothering our communities including
that of HIV/AIDS.

We were taken through HIV/AIDS as
news from the international perspective,
role of the media in the HIV/AIDS crusade
and the language of HIV/AIDS among
other topics.

What I found useful was the need to
bring a human face into our reporting. We
should also make room for peoples views
in our reporting. We would be doing a
disservice to our audience, listeners and

general public if we only reported on
government policies, or what for instance
non-governmental organizations among
other groups were doing instead of going
to the grassroots to report from the
perspective or experiences of the people.

Another refreshing angle was the fact

that the five-day course made provision
for us to tour the FEVERS Unit to visit with
people living with HIV/AIDS and the Ghana
AIDS Commission.

On the whole the course was useful
and helped in equipping us with new skills
to make us better reporters.***



*Eunice
Menka,
sitted in
front
(second
from left),
during one
of the
training
sections.*

Keynote Address at the Opening Ceremony of Workshop on "Reporting on HIV/AIDS" at Africa Institute of Journalism and Communication 16th June 2003

By Prof. Sakyi A. Amoa

Director-General of the Ghana AIDS Commission

Mr. Chairman

Facilitators

Members of staff

Students of the Workshop

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is an honour for me to be invited to the opening ceremony of this workshop on *Reporting on HIV/AIDS* being organized by the Institute of Journalism and Communication and the US Embassy. I am particularly delighted that a formal training of Journalists is being introduced today in Ghana on reporting on HIV/AIDS.

Mr. Chairman, human history reveals a tapestry of epidemics that periodically sweep across vast areas of human populations, kills a number of people and eventually dies down or fades away into oblivion. Once the epidemic is gone, not much information is left behind for posterity. What is worse is the lack of accurate and sufficient information on the disease to help the general public to understand the epidemiology and its impact of the society. For effective management of the HIV/AIDS epidemic that is currently plaguing societies, we cannot repeat this mistake and this necessitates a focus on the role of the journalist in HIV/AIDS intervention activities.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic, which emerged appeared on the scene some two decades ago, has shown much resilience in its devastation of mankind mostly in developing countries and particularly in Africa. Africa carries about 70% of the pandemic. It is estimated that about 29.4 million people infected with the disease live in the sub-region (UNAIDS, 2002). Approximately 3.5 million people are infected daily. Ten million young people aged between 15-24 and almost 3 million children under 15 are currently living with the disease. Indeed, according to a recent Church World Service Report, AIDS has killed more people than World Wars 1 and 2, the Korean War, the Vietnam and the Gulf Wars combined.

The first AIDS cases were reported in Ghana in 1986. As at the end of June 2002 a



cumulative total of about 500,000 AIDS cases had been reported. Cases have been reported in all the 10 regions of the country as well as in all age groups. There are, however, important regional variations in the reporting. This can be attributed to such factors as, variations in the populations of the various regions, availability of public health institutions, the stage of the epidemic and the health seeking behaviour of the people.

The peak age group of HIV/AIDS case is the 25-34 year bracket, which accounts for nearly 45%, as reported in 2002. By sex high prevalence rates are in the 25-29 age group for females, and 30-34 age group for males. Nearly 90% of the cases are reported for the 15-49 age group. For children the majority of cases are in the 0-4 year age bracket and they are infected through Mother-To-Child-Transmission. Sixty-three percent of all reported cases in Ghana currently are among females. Another characteristic of the epidemic in Ghana is that initially nearly 80 percent of people who were diagnosed had either travelled or had lived outside the country. This feature has since changed as presently new cases that are reported occur among people without a history of previous travel.

The average adult prevalence of HIV from Sentinel Surveillance report is known

to have increased gradually from 2.6% in 1999 to 3.6% in 2001. Currently and according to 2002 report the median prevalence rate is 3.4% and the mean is 3.8%. There are regional variations in the mean prevalence rates with the Northern Region recording the lowest average rate of 2.0% and the Eastern Region the highest of 7.9%. The prevalence among STI patients and blood donors in the Southern sector is 24.0% and 3.0% respectively. Among commercial sex workers in the Accra-Tema municipality the prevalence was estimated at 75.9% in 1998 while that of Kumasi is 86%.

Currently, heterosexual sex remains the most predominant mode of transmission accounting for 75-80% of all infections. Mother-to-child transmission and transmission through blood and blood products account for 15% and 5% respectively. STIs are known to facilitate acquisition and transmission of HIV. The characteristics of the disease as seen in Ghana is just about the same in other African countries. The prevalence rate of other West African Countries is between 5 and 11 percent.

In view of the enormous challenges posed by HIV/AIDS and STIs to the socio-economic development of our countries, there is the need for effective policies to guide our national response. Thus major issues related to the reduction of new infections as well as the provision of optimal care and support for those already infected and affected are being addressed in the National response in our various countries. The devastating impact of HIV/AIDS requires individuals and societies re-evaluate their attitudes, prejudices and behaviours. There is the need for an effective public policy, which seeks to promote support and care rather than coercion; tolerance and compassion rather than discrimination and protection of human rights and dignity rather than stigmatisation and exclusion.

The devastating impact of HIV/AIDS on socio-economic development cannot be over emphasized as at the national level, it affects population growth and human resource development. Institutions both public and private in Africa are experiencing increased health bills for sick employees, increase in absenteeism and reduction in productivity due to ill-health

arising from the infection and subsequent deaths. Indeed, it has been projected that many institutions in Africa may lose up to 50% of their current workforce over the next 5-10 years with the consequential loss of skills and industrial knowledge if effective measures are not instituted to control HIV/AIDS epidemic. This will lead to reduction in productivity and output in all sectors. Human resource development is known to be an expensive process, and any investment made in this area must be protected. We can protect our human resource only by giving them enough education on the causes, methods of transmission and prevention and control of the epidemic.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is from the perspective of the role information plays in national HIV/AIDS campaign that the National HIV/AIDS Policy requires the Ministry of Communication and Technology and the Information Services Department to play an active role in information and education on HIV/AIDS. This is expected to be done through the development and broadcasting of programmes, sports and advertisements on various aspects of HIV/AIDS and STI. The Ghana

AIDS Commission is enjoined to collaborate with other private media organizations to strengthen the capacity for effective public and private media involvement in HIV/AIDS/STI prevention. Besides this general directive as spelt out in the policy, I think the role of the media should focus on the following:

- ◆ Both the electronic and print media to become partners of the GAC in pushing forward the fight against HIV/AIDS
- ◆ Media personnel to arm themselves with the situation on the ground and be able to inform the general public effectively
- ◆ Media personnel to be the public relations arm of the GAC. Must be prepared to review and comment on what goes on
- ◆ Media personnel to advocates of behavioural change communication. They should constantly talk about risky behaviour life styles of our youth in order to protect them from getting the infections
- ◆ Phone-in programmes of FM stations

can be used for counselling purposes

- ◆ Newspapers can carry educative features and articles in all aspects of the campaign -journalists can become evaluators of the national response i.e. visit and comment on beneficiary intervention activities
- ◆ We should not think that there will be media fatigue on HIV/AIDS
The more information and education that is presented on the pandemic the better it would be for us
- ◆ Innovative programmes to be developed and presented on our FM radios
- ◆ Utilize two seconds of the presentations on radio and TVs to give some information on HIV/AIDS, which will not cost the station anything.

It is my hope that after your training, you will utilize the knowledge and skills you will require to project the unique role of education and communication the journalist can play in our national response to fight HIV/AIDS in Ghana.

Thank you.***



Participants at one of the training sections, at the Multi-purpose Room of the Public Affairs Section of the Embassy.

MY IMPRESSION ON THE WORKSHOP ON HIV/AIDS FOR JOURNALIST IN GHANA

By Suleiman Mustapha Dauda

I found the workshop very useful because it has helped to expand my knowledge on the disease and the modes of acquisition.

It has transformed my professional skills in covering news on persons affected with HIV/AIDS how they can be made to feel that they are part of the society and that society needs them more than ever before to living testimonies the existence of the virus and how it is spreading very fast on the African continent.

The workshop which was organised by the African Institute of Journalism and Communications AIJC and sponsored by the Public Affairs Section of the United States Embassy has really exposed me not only to the dangers of the virus as a media man but the language to use in covering people living with the virus. For example I learnt at the workshop that sensational terms like AIDS scourge and plague must to a large extent be avoided in our reportage because they imply that HIV/AIDS cannot be controlled which would fuel, panic, discrimination and hopelessness. Instead terms like HIV pandemic and epidemic should be used more regularly in our reportage.

Again, words like AIDS test should be avoided because test does not exist but rather AIDS is diagnosed according to specific medical criteria that identify the symptoms of the virus.

Stigma, prejudices, fear and misconceptions surrounding HIV/



Suleiman Mustapha Dauda

AIDS are only too abundant and so the language we use to conceptualise and talk about the virus reflects our personal biases and particularly our understanding or lack of understanding of the virus.

Personally, I am adopting a policy of behaviour change and to help impact behavioural changes in my community as far as our sexual lives are concerned. On the last day of the workshop, our visit to the fever unit at Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital has completely changed my perception of the carriers of the virus. I had before the visit been looking out for the symptoms of the virus on those I come into contact with, but I have come to know through my interactions with some carriers of the virus that a person may look very healthy with no sign of the virus on the surface but may actually be carrying the virus.

I have also come to know that AIDS has surpassed malaria as the leading cause of death in Africa, and it kills many times more Africans than war. In Africa, 58 per cent of those infected are women.

Research at the workshop indicates that experts relate the severity of the African AIDS epidemic to the regions poverty. Health systems are ill-equipped for prevention, diagnosis and treatment. Poverty also forces many men to become migrant workers in urban areas, where they may have multiple sex partners it leads many women to become commercial sex workers, vastly increasing their risk of infection. To this end, journalists can effect the most needed change by adopting new angles of reporting on AIDS.

I really find this very beneficial because of the impact it will have in our part of the world. Special gratitude goes to Rachel Jones from National Public Radio in Washington for facilitating the workshop. We have indeed benefitted immensely from her experience and knowledge in public broadcasting.

Many thanks also go to the Public Affairs Section of the American Embassy, especially Susan Parker-Burns, who despite her busy schedule had time for us throughout the workshop. In fact the workshop is the best form of aid America can give to the Third World. Gratitude also goes to AIJC for successfully organising the workshop.***

PROCLAMATION BY THE PRESIDENT ON BLACK MUSIC MONTH 2003



President George W. Bush honors music legend Lionel Hampton during a ceremony recognizing Black Music Month in the White House on June 30, 2001.

For centuries, black artists have created or inspired distinctively American musical styles. During Black Music Month, we celebrate the ways that African-American music has helped shape American society and reflect the character of our Nation, and we recognize the pioneers who spearheaded these important musical forms.

Throughout history, African-American music has shown the social climate of the time. From

the days of slavery and discrimination, through the progress of the Civil Rights movement, to today, black music has told the story of the African-American experience. In addition to giving voice to black struggles, faith, and joys, African-American music has helped also to bring people together. Before our Nation's strides toward equal justice, music such as jazz and blues provided a venue in which people of all races could be judged by

their talent, and not the color of their skin.

The people who sang the earliest African-American music knew the worst of human cruelty and earthly injustice. In spirituals, work songs, and shouts, we hear the pain of separation and the bitterness of oppression. We also hear courage, and the comfort and strength of a faith that trusts God to right every wrong and wipe away every tear. These songs were used to share stories, spread ideas, preserve history, and establish community.

Early work songs and spirituals laid the creative foundation for the development of gospel, blues, and jazz. In black churches throughout the south, gospel offered a medium to share the good news. The beauty of both gospel and the blues lies in their power to express emotions that can be felt as well as heard. The blues were first popularized in America by W.C. Handy. A classically trained musician, this "Father of the Blues" helped to compose and distribute blues music throughout the country. His music continues to touch people today.

In the early 20th century, the progression to jazz took place all over the country, from the deep south of New Orleans and the Mississippi Delta to northern cities such as Chicago and New York. Black artists migrated to Harlem, New York in large numbers, creating a culturally diverse hub for black art, writing, and music known as the Harlem Renaissance. Harlem became a place of energy and magic, and timeless music emerged from this period. The

heart of the Harlem Renaissance reflected in the original and authentic music of such influential figures as Bessie Smith, Count Basie, and Fletcher Henderson.

African Americans continued to influence popular music through the 1940s and 50s, with the emergence of rhythm and blues and rock and roll. These revolutionary styles built upon various forms of African-American music, fusing elements of jazz, blues, and gospel.

African-American music continues to influence the American music scene today with styles such as rap and hip-hop. As we celebrate the many creative and inspiring African-American artists whose efforts have enhanced our Nation, we recognize their enduring legacy and look to a future of continued musical achievement.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby



Regina Belle performs for President George W. Bush and First Lady Laura Bush during a Black Music Month celebration in Room of the White House on June 30, 2001.

proclaim June 2003 as Black Music Month. I encourage Americans of all backgrounds to learn more about the heritage of black musicians, and to celebrate the remarkable role they have played in our history and culture.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this

twenty-fourth day of June, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-seventh.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Father's Day

Sunday, June 15th was celebrated the world over as Father's Day. Before the dawn of that day, you should have bought a card, possibly a gag gift and maybe made reservations for a special brunch. Father's day is the day to say thanks to dads, grandfathers and other father figures for all they've done



for each of us. The observance of the day dates back to 1910, when Mrs. John Dodd of Spokane, Washington, wanted to honor her father who raised six children by himself after his wife's death. The idea soon caught on and spread across the country, but didn't become official until 1972. Today, there are some 55-million married-couple households. Over 9-million have one child under 18, 10-million have two children, and 5.5-million have three or more. Some 4-million fathers are raising children by themselves. You can find these and more facts about America from the U.S. Census Bureau on the Web at www.census.gov.***





MARTIN LUTHER KING CENTER

SELECTED INTERNET RESOURCES

AIDS Healthcare Foundation

Global Immunity

<http://www.aidshealth.org/GlobalImmunity/default.htm>

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

Global Health

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/globalhealth/default.htm>

Family Health International

<http://www.fhi.org/en/aids/naids.html>

Global AIDS Interfaith Alliance

<http://www.thegaia.org/>

Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization

<http://www.vaccinealliance.org/>

Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria

<http://www.GlobalFundATM.org/>

Global Health Council

<http://www.globalhealth.org/>

Global Polio Eradication Initiative

<http://www.polioeradication.org/>

International AIDS Economics Networks

<http://www.iaen.org/index.htm>

International AIDS Society

<http://www.ias.se/>

International AIDS Vaccine Initiative

<http://www.iavi.org/>

International Medical Corps

<http://www.imc-la.com/about.html>

Kaiser Family Foundation

<http://www.kff.org/docs/about/>

Merck

<http://www.merck.com/>

Pan American Health Organization

<http://www.paho.org/>

Rockefeller Foundation

www.rockfound.org

Rotary International

- PolioPlus Program
- <http://www.rotary.org/foundation/polioplus/index.html>

- Rotary Responds to AIDS

- <http://www.rotary.org/programs/aids/index.html>

UNITED NATIONS

Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS

<http://www.unaids.org/>

United States Agency for International Development Global Health

http://www.usaid.gov/pop_health/

United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Global AIDS Program

<http://www.cdc.gov/nchstp/od/gap/>

United States National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

Comprehensive International Program of Research on AIDS (CIPRA)

<http://www.niaid.nih.gov/CIPRA/>

Vaccine Page

<http://www.vaccine.org/>

White House Office of National AIDS Policy

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/onap/aids.html>

World Bank

<http://www.worldbank.org/>

World Health Organization

<http://www.who.int/>

- Commission on Macroeconomics and Health
 - <http://www.cmhealth.org/>
- Communicable Diseases
 - <http://www.who.int/disasters/comm diseases.cfm>
- Emergency and Humanitarian Action
 - <http://www.who.int/disasters/>
- Roll Back Malaria
 - <http://mosquito.who.int/>

XIII International AIDS Conference

July 9-July 14, 2000, Durban, South Africa

<http://www.aids2000.org/>

AIDS Education Global Information System

The AIDS Education Global Information System (AEGIS) offers news, clinical information, a law library, and other features. Maintained by the Sisters of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary.

<http://www.aegis.com/sitemap.asp>

AIDS Knowledge Base

This 1999 textbook on HIV disease in adults is from the University of California, San Francisco, and the San Francisco General Hospital.

<http://hivinsite.ucsf.edu/akb/1997/about.html>

Best of the Net

Links to HIV/AIDS programs and organizations in various countries selected by editorial reviewers from "Best of the Net" section of the "Journal of the American Medical Association" HIV/AIDS Information Center.

<http://www.ama-assn.org/special/hiv/bestonet/global.htm>

The Body: an AIDS and HIV Information Resource

This service of the Body Health Resources Corporation is sponsored in part by several pharmaceutical companies, and provides information in over 250 topical areas.

<http://www.thebody.com/>

CDC National Prevention Information Network

The National Prevention Information Network (NPIN) is a reference, referral, and distribution service for information on HIV/AIDS, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, and Tuberculosis, sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

<http://www.cdcnpin.org/>

The Deadliest Epidemic: AIDS in Africa

A collection of news articles and links compiled by the Washington Post.

Guide to NIH HIV/AIDS Information Services

Prepared by the National Library of Medicine, this is a guide to the many HIV/AIDS activities of the National Institutes of Health with selected public health service activities.

<http://www.sis.nlm.nih.gov/aids/index.html>

HIV/AIDS

Information about USAID development programs to combat HIV/AIDS and infectious diseases. From the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

http://www.info.usaid.gov/pop_health/aids/index.html

HIV/AIDS

The World Health Organization provides information on its work combating HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections.

<http://www.who.int/health-topics/hiv.htm>

HIV/AIDS - A Guide to Resources

Policy texts and annotated links to U.S. and international resources concerning AIDS and other infectious diseases. From the Office of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State.

<http://usinfo.state.gov/topical/global/hiv/>

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information Service (ATIS)

Coordinated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, ATIS provides information in English and Spanish about federally approved treatment guidelines for HIV and AIDS.

<http://www.hivatis.org/>

HIV/AIDS and the World of Work

Information on the impact of HIV/AIDS on work, productivity, employment and development. Maintained by the International Labour Organization.

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/trav/aids/index.htm>

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

The Division of Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome provides information on AIDS vaccine research, clinical trials, and DAIDS-supported programs.

<http://www.niaid.nih.gov/research/Daids.htm>

Report on the Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic

Released by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS in June 2000. Available in English, French, and Spanish.

http://www.unaids.org/epidemic_update/report/

UNAIDS

The homepage of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS provides documents on the World AIDS Campaign, and information on international conferences on AIDS.

<http://www.unaids.org/>

White House Office of National AIDS Policy

Information on efforts by the Clinton/Gore administration to address the national and international AIDS pandemic. Provides links to government and non-government sites.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/ONAP/>

